

## CLAIMS:

1. An electronic gaming console having credit means, reward means, game control means, display means, and player input controls, the control means being responsive to the credit means and the player input controls to play a game which is displayed on the display means and if a winning event occurs, a player reward is awarded by the reward means, the gaming console being characterised in that the game provides a video display of a labyrinth of pins and the player input controls allow the player to initiate the motion of ball images on the display, player rewards being awarded when the ball images come to rest in predetermined prize winning locations.
2. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the player controls include a control to control firing speed
3. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the player controls include a control to control firing direction.
4. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the player controls include a control to affect or control the trajectory of a ball after it is fired.
5. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the number of balls provided to a player for a game is dependant upon a number of credits bet on the game.
6. The gaming console as claimed in claim 5, wherein each credit bet in any one game by a player buys one ball.
7. The gaming console as claimed in claim 5 wherein, the number of balls provided for the first credit is different to the number of balls provided for subsequent credits wagered on a single game.
8. The gaming console as claimed in claim 5, wherein each credit bet by a player buys more balls than the previous credit bet in any one game.
9. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein balls of different colours are provided and the value of prizes awarded are determined according to the colour of balls dropped.
10. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball changes colour as it drops through the labyrinth.
11. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball changes the colour of any pins that it hits, as it drops through the labyrinth, to its own colour.

12. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball, if it drops into a container, changes the colour of all other balls in that same container at the end of the game.
13. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein balls of different sizes are provided.
14. The gaming console as claimed in claim 13, wherein the value of prizes awarded are determined according to the sizes of balls dropped.
15. The gaming console as claimed in claim 13, wherein the speed at which the ball drops differs depending upon the size of the ball.
16. The gaming console as claimed in claim 13, wherein larger balls are provided which will not fit between some pins or into some holes or containers such that the large balls may block holes or containers that they come to rest against or may knock out pins that they hit.
17. The gaming console as claimed in claim 13, wherein the size of the balls dropped affects their path through the labyrinth.
18. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of balls dropped is variable from game to game.
19. The gaming console as claimed in claim 18, wherein the number of balls dropped is selectable by the player.
20. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the position from which the balls are dropped is variable from game to game and/or during a game.
21. The gaming console as claimed in claim 20, wherein the position from which the balls are dropped is selectable by the player.
22. The gaming console as claimed in claim 20, wherein the further out from the centre line of the labyrinth that the balls are dropped, the greater chance of the balls landing in the outside buckets, and the outside buckets being provided with larger prizes.
23. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein, the game permits a varying the number of active balls to be purchased and dropped, while maintaining a constant total number of balls being dropped from game to game, the total number of balls being independent of the number of active balls dropped.
24. The gaming console as claimed in claim 23, wherein, the unpurchased balls are distinguished from the purchased balls by appearance.

25. The gaming console as claimed in claim 24, wherein, the unpurchased balls are distinguished from the purchased balls by being transparent.
26. The gaming console as claimed in claim 24, wherein, the unpurchased balls are distinguished from the purchased balls by colour.
- 5 27. The gaming console as claimed in claim 24, wherein, the unpurchased balls are distinguished from the purchased balls by size.
28. The gaming console as claimed in claim 23, wherein the unpurchased balls are available to trigger the awarding of a feature game or bonus.
29. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the balls have a plurality of possible associated functions or characteristics.
- 10 30. The gaming console as claimed in claim 29, wherein the functions or characteristics associated with the balls may be varied from game to game.
31. The gaming console as claimed in claim 30, wherein the functions or characteristics associated with the balls may be selected by the player.
- 15 32. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein different shaped balls are provided such that the shape of the balls are matched to holes and only balls with matching shapes can fall into a respective hole.
33. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein when a ball drops, the path that it follows is plotted.
- 20 34. The gaming console as claimed in claim 33, wherein, if another ball follows that same path a bonus prize or feature is awarded.
35. The gaming console as claimed in claim 33, wherein the pins that the ball hits change colour or are lit to mark the path of the ball.
36. The gaming console as claimed in claim 35, wherein, if all pins change colour or become lit, a bonus prize or feature is given.
- 25 37. The gaming console as claimed in claim 35, wherein the lit pins may be retained from one game to the next.
38. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein, as balls drop, blockages formed as a blocking element are placed along the path of the ball, such that no other ball may drop through the blockages.
- 30 39. The gaming console as claimed in claim 38, wherein the blockages are formed by pins which appear along the path of the ball.
40. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the balls are in the shape of coins.
- 35 41. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball has a characteristic whereby it may alter the paths of other balls.

42. The gaming console as claimed in claim 41, wherein, if one ball drops in one direction after it hits a particular pin, then all balls to hit the same pin from then on will also drop in that same direction,
43. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein when balls drop into  
5 holes they are transformed to another location.
44. The gaming console as claimed in claim 43, wherein the transformed ball is channelled into a container.
45. The gaming console as claimed in claim 43, wherein the transformed ball appears coming out of a holes.
- 10 46. The gaming console as claimed in claim 43, wherein the transformed ball re-appears in other section of the screen.
47. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein some wins are paid in balls rather than credits.
48. The gaming console as claimed in claim 47, wherein, the occurrence of a  
15 predetermined trigger event causes extra balls to be dropped as part of the game.
49. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein some balls travel other than vertically across the screen as if defying gravity.
50. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one Fireballs  
20 is provided which burns the pins as it hits them.
51. The gaming console as claimed in claim 50, wherein the burnt pins allow subsequent balls to pass through them.
52. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein some balls are provided with indicia and, if they land in a certain order, a bonus prize or  
25 feature is awarded.
53. The gaming console as claimed in claim 52, wherein the indicia are numbers and, if they land in a certain order, a bonus prize or feature is awarded,
54. The gaming console as claimed in claim 52, wherein the indicia are letters  
30 and, if they land in an order spelling a specific word, a bonus prize or feature is awarded.
55. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one hole is provided which disappears or closes up as soon as a ball drops into it.
56. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball is  
35 provided which when it hits a pin will split up into a number of balls.

57. The gaming console as claimed in claim 56, wherein at least one ball is a larger ball which can split into smaller balls when it hits a pin.
58. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball is provided which has the ability to jump from column to column and award prizes.
59. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball is provided which will enable bonuses to be found.
60. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball is a larger ball which can knock pins over when it hits them.
- 10 61. The gaming console as claimed in claim 60, wherein at least one ball is provided which can fall down the pin holes.
62. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one ball is a different sized ball such that the bigger ball is less likely to fall down holes.
63. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, the configuration of the labyrinth of pins is varied depending upon the number of credits bet.
- 15 64. The gaming console as claimed in claim 63, wherein the number of rows of pins is variable from game to game.
65. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of rows of pins is variable from game to game.
- 20 66. The gaming console as claimed in claim 63, wherein the number of rows of pins is selectable by the player.
67. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of rows of pins is selectable by the player.
68. The gaming console as claimed in claim 63, wherein the pin pattern is variable from game to game.
- 25 69. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pin pattern is variable from game to game.
70. The gaming console as claimed in claim 69, wherein the pin pattern is selectable by the player.
- 30 71. The gaming console as claimed in claim 68, wherein the pin pattern is selectable by the player.
72. The gaming console as claimed in claim 63, wherein the number of pins appearing in the game is variable from game to game.
73. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of pins appearing in the game is variable from game to game.
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74. The gaming console as claimed in claim 73, wherein the number of pins appearing in the game is selectable by the player.
75. The gaming console as claimed in claim 72, wherein the number of pins appearing in the game is selectable by the player.
- 5 76. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, rewards are assigned to one or more of the pins, such that the reward is awarded if the pin is struck by a ball.
77. The gaming console as claimed in claim 76 wherein, the number of pins having rewards assigned to them is related to the number of credits bet.
- 10 78. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, selection of the value of the prize to be awarded is determined according to how the pins are struck by each ball dropped.
79. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the awarding of prizes, bonuses or features depends on how the pins are struck.
- 15 80. The gaming console as claimed in claim 79, wherein at least one pin is associated with a bonus feature whereby the feature is awarded if the pin is hit by a plurality of balls.
81. The gaming console as claimed in claim 79, wherein the number of balls required to hit the pin for the bonus feature to be awarded may be varied from
- 20 game to game.
82. The gaming console as claimed in claim 81, wherein the number of balls required to hit the pin for the bonus feature to be awarded may be selected by the player.
83. The gaming console as claimed in claim 79, wherein prizes or bonuses are
- 25 awarded depending on the number of times each pin is hit and/or when a predetermined pattern of pins is hit, the prizes or bonuses awarded being selected as one or more of, free games, free balls, second screen features, wins multiplied by odds, and progressive jackpots.
84. The gaming console as claimed in claim 79, wherein the prizes or bonuses
- 30 are awarded when a pattern of pins is hit the pattern being selected as one of, a row, a diagonal, or a diamond shape.
85. The gaming console as claimed in claim 84, wherein pattern of pins can vary from game to game.
86. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is
- 35 provided which will swallow or capture a balls when hit by the ball.

87. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which will release balls when hit.
88. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which, on each occasion it is hit it becomes lit and awards a bonus.
- 5 89. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which, on each occasion it is hit it changes colour and awards a bonus when a certain colour is achieved.
90. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which, on each occasion it is hit it records the number of hits and  
10 awards a bonus when a predetermined count is reached.
91. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plurality of pins is provided which each have different colours and when a certain combination of colours are all lit a bonus is awarded.
92. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is  
15 provided which, is tilted so that the balls bouncing off the pin will be biased to one side.
93. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which, has a hole in it for the ball to pass.
94. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is  
20 provided which can be knocked over for the ball to continue on its path.
95. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a pattern of pins is provided which randomly flash during the ball drop sequence awarding bonuses if a pin is struck by a ball while it is flashing.
96. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is  
25 provided which may be solid or greyed out to alternatively block balls or allow them to pass.
97. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one group of pins is provided which are be joined by a rod to block balls from rolling down certain paths.
- 30 98. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which has a number on it which represent an amount of credits, or free games, awarded when the pin is hit.
99. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which has a number on it which represent an amount of credits, or  
35 free games, awarded when the pin is hit while lit.

100. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one group of pins is provided, such that when all pins in the group are hit a bonus is awarded.
101. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one group of pins is provided, such that when all pins in the group are hit while lit a bonus is awarded.
102. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which has the ability, when a ball strikes the pin, of flicking the ball which strikes the pin in any direction.
103. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided which is sticky such that if a ball hits it, the ball will stick and stay on the pin.
104. The gaming console as claimed in claim 103, wherein, when the ball is stuck to the at least one sticky pin, a block is created where balls can no longer pass through that position.
105. The gaming console as claimed in claim 103, wherein, when the ball is stuck to the at least one sticky pin, another ball is required to hit the stuck ball in order to dislodge it.
106. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein, for the duration of a free game feature, all holes that are normally present to swallow balls during a base game are replaced by pins thereby providing an increased probability of a prize for each ball dropped in a free game.
107. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein, at least one feature pin is provided such that, if a certain number of feature pins are hit, a feature game is awarded.
108. The gaming console as claimed in claim 107, wherein the feature pins are free game pins and when a certain number of free game pins are hit, a free game is awarded.
109. The gaming console as claimed in claim 107, wherein the feature pin is a "shortcut" pin such that when a ball hits the shortcut pin it will skip straight to another position on the screen.
110. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one pin is provided with a deflector such that when hit, the pin will always deflect a ball in one specified direction.
111. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pin or pins on the centre line of the labyrinth are larger than others of the pins, blocking off access



through the centre of the labyrinth and hence increasing the chance of balls falling towards the outer containers,

112. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pin or pins on the centre line of the labyrinth become larger in the event of a predetermined trigger, blocking off access through the centre of the labyrinth and hence increasing the chance of balls falling towards the outer containers,

113. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein all pins become the same colour, to provide a special feature, in the event of a predetermined trigger.

114. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein two or more pins are provided with an "elastic band" surrounding them such that if a ball drops against the band, it will be bounced off with more energy than for other pins in the game.

115. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a number of holes are located amongst the pins to remove balls from the game.

116. The gaming console as claimed in claim 115 wherein the number and/or position of holes amongst the pins may be varied from game to game.

117. The gaming console as claimed in claim 116, wherein the number and/or position of holes amongst the pins may be selected by the player.

118. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1 wherein, a plurality of targets are provided and rewards are assigned to the targets such that if a ball comes to rest in or on the target, a reward is awarded.

119. The gaming console as claimed in claim 118 wherein, the target is a surface of an object.

120. The gaming console as claimed in claim 118 wherein, the target is one of the prize winning locations.

121. The gaming console as claimed in claim 120 wherein, the prize winning locations are containers.

122. The gaming console as claimed in claim 121 wherein, the number of containers provided is related to the number of credits bet.

123. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the position of prize winning locations may be varied from game to game.

124. The gaming console as claimed in claim 123, wherein the position of prize winning locations may be selected by the player.

125. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the awarding of prizes, bonuses or features depends on how the prize winning locations are struck.

5 126. The gaming console as claimed in claim 125, wherein at least one prize winning location requires more than one ball to come to rest in the location before a prize will be awarded.

127. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of balls required to come to rest in the at least one prize winning location before a prize will be awarded may be varied from game to game.

10 128. The gaming console as claimed in claim 127, wherein the number of balls required to come to rest in the at least one prize winning location before a prize will be awarded may be selected by the player.

129. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the prize winning locations comprise containers and one or more container are associated with a bonus feature whereby the feature is awarded if the container or containers are filled in a pre-determined way.

130. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein the bonus feature is awarded if a predetermined number of balls are caught in a predetermined set of one or more containers.

20 131. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein the number of balls required to be caught and the composition of the set of containers may vary from game to game.

132. The gaming console as claimed in claim 131, wherein the number of balls required to be caught and the composition of the set of containers may be selected by the player.

133. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein at least one container has a closable cover which prevents balls from entering the container when it is closed, the lid being opened and closed by predetermined trigger conditions.

30 134. The gaming console as claimed in claim 133, wherein the number of containers having covers and the triggers which open and close them may vary from game to game.

135. The gaming console as claimed in claim 134, wherein the number of containers having covers and the triggers which open and close them may be selected by the player.

136. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein at least one container has a spring which will flick a ball entering the container to another container.

137. The gaming console as claimed in claim 136, wherein the number of  
5 containers having springs may vary from game to game.

138. The gaming console as claimed in claim 137, wherein the number of containers having springs may be selected by the player.

139. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein at least one  
10 container has an animated object sitting above the container to catch balls before they drop into a container, the object being activated and deactivated by predetermined trigger conditions.

140. The gaming console as claimed in claim 139, wherein, when the animated object catches a ball it moves the ball to another location.

141. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129, wherein balls may be held  
15 and accumulated in at least one container over a number of games to contribute to a bonus condition.

142. The gaming console as claimed in claim 141, wherein the ability to accumulated balls over a number of games may be selected by the player.

143. The gaming console as claimed in claim 129 wherein, the rewards  
20 provided in the game have values which are a function of the number of credits bet.

144. The gaming console as claimed in claim 121 wherein, at least one container is provided which moves position from game to game.

145. The gaming console as claimed in claim 121 wherein, at least one  
25 container is provided which moves position as the balls drop to provide a moving target.

146. The gaming console as claimed in claim 121, wherein prizes are awarded according to the number of balls which are in each container at the end of the ball drop.

30 147. The gaming console as claimed in claim 120, wherein the prize winning locations are cups.

148. The gaming console as claimed in claim 120, wherein the prize winning locations are pairs of pins spaced by less than a ball diameter.

149. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, a plurality of ball types are  
35 provided and values of prizes awarded are determined according to the type of balls dropped.

150. The gaming console as claimed in claim 149, wherein the balls are marked with indicia and the value of prizes awarded are determined according to the indicia on the balls which are in any container.

151. The gaming console as claimed in claim 150, wherein the indicia are  
5 numbers.

152. The gaming console as claimed in claim 151, wherein the numbers represent prize values.

153. The gaming console as claimed in claim 151, wherein the numbers represent values by which a prize associated with the container is multiplied.

10 154. The gaming console as claimed in claim 153, wherein changing the credit bet by a player changes a multiplication factor by which prizes are multiplied in the game.

155. The gaming console as claimed in claim 154, wherein the larger the credit bet by a player the larger the factor.

15 156. The gaming console as claimed in claim 155, wherein the multiplication factor varies linearly with credits bet.

157. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the game has a number of prize zones each offering at least one prize.

158. The gaming console as claimed in claim 157, wherein the number and  
20 locations of the prize zones may be varied from game to game.

159. The gaming console as claimed in claim 158, wherein the number and locations of the prize zones may be selected by the player.

160. The gaming console as claimed in claim 159, wherein the number and locations of the prize zones is selected by the size of the bet wagered by the  
25 player on the particular game.

161. The gaming console as claimed in claim 121, wherein when a bonus is awarded the prizes associated with a particular container become larger.

162. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein tools or controls are provided which may affect the path of the balls during a game.

30 163. The gaming console as claimed in claim 162, wherein the player controls allow the balls to be dropped or projected at different angles.

164. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number and/or function of the tools or controls may be varied from game to game.

165. The gaming console as claimed in claim 164, wherein the number and/or  
35 function of the tools or controls may be selected by the player.

166. The gaming console as claimed in claim 165, wherein the player controls include a flipper to flick the balls.

167. The gaming console as claimed in claim 166, wherein the flippers are provided at certain locations such that if a ball hits the flipper it will be flicked

5 back to drop through some or all of the pins again

168. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the path of a ball is affected by an object which moves the ball sideways or upward.

169. The gaming console as claimed in claim 168, wherein the object is a ladder.

10 170. The gaming console as claimed in claim 168, wherein the object is a magnet.

171. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a further type of game is incorporated into the base game.

172. The gaming console as claimed in claim 171, wherein the further game is provided as a feature game associated with the base game.

173. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a spinning reel game.

174. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a keno game.

20 175. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a bingo game.

176. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a card game.

25 177. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a second screen animation.

178. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a chocolate wheel game.

179. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is awarded from the base game in response to a predetermined trigger.

30 180. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game triggers another base game feature.

181. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is played in conjunction with the base game.

35 182. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a spinning reel game and is played in conjunction with the base game such that

reels spin and then balls drop in accordance with the outcome of the spinning reels, for every game played.

183. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is a chocolate wheel which replaces a prize container such that where as a ball  
5 drops through the chocolate wheel, it will spin and pay the prize that is spun up.

184. The gaming console as claimed in claim 172, wherein the feature game is an independent game and where a predetermined trigger condition or award causes the feature game to run, and if a winning condition is achieved in the feature game, the feature game reveals a bonus condition.

10 185. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the bonus condition is an award of a prize.

186. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the bonus condition is a win multiplier which multiplies a prize already won.

15 187. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the bonus condition is a number of free games.

188. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the bonus condition is the awarding of one or more extra balls to drop in the base game.

189. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the bonus condition causes a change in the game structure.

20 190. The gaming console as claimed in claim 184, wherein the trigger condition to run the feature game is achieved by the collection of one or more balls in a predetermined container.

191. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein the structure of the game is player selectable.

25 192. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein when a bonus is awarded the prizes associated with a particular container become larger.

193. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a slot reel is activated by a ball or triggering event to provide a multiplier, or bonus trigger determined by the stopping position of the reel.

30 194. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a chocolate wheel is activated by a ball or other means to provide a multiplier, bonus or trigger determined by the stopping position of the wheel.

35 195. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a spinning reel game played above the pins such that when a winning combination occurs on the reels, coins come out from below the reels and drop into the pins such that the base game determines the prize,

196. The gaming console as claimed in claim 1, wherein a feature game element is used to determine the base game structure.

197. The gaming console as claimed in claim 196, wherein the prize values, position of holes, number of pins, and pin layout are determined by the feature  
5 game.

198. The gaming console as claimed in claim 196, wherein containers have multipliers associated with them and when a win occurs on a feature game, a ball is dropped through the pins to determine how much the win will be multiplied by.